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CHINA TO BUILD WORLD'S LARGEST DAM CLOSE TO INDIAN BORDER

China on Thursday approved the construction of the world's largest dam on the Brahmaputra River in Tibet, close to its border with India

$137 BILLION PROJECT AT HIMALAYAN GORGE

Costing $137 billion, it is set to be the world's biggest infra project till date. The dam is to be built at a huge gorge in the Himalayan reaches where the Brahmaputra makes a huge U-turn to flow into Arunachal Pradesh. Construction poses huge challenges as the project site is located along a tectonic plate boundary where earthquakes regularly occur

WORRY OVER CHINA FLOODING NORTHEAST

- An official statement on Wednesday sought to allay concerns about earthquakes, saying "a solid foundation has been laid for the science-based, secure, and high-quality development" of the project
- There are worries in India, given the massive size of the dam, that China could weaponise it and flood areas in the northeast during war

300 bn kWh

OF POWER TO BE GENERATED EACH YEAR, ENOUGH FOR ANNUAL NEEDS 30 CR HOUSES

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

ARCHITECT OF INDIA OF OUR TIMES

I hope history will be kinder to me than the contemporary media

Manmohan Singh on January 3, 2014 at the fag end of his tenure as PM

INDIA WIDE AWAKE

"India is now wide awake. We shall prevail. We shall overcome," Manmohan Singh said in his maiden speech in Parliament on July 24, 1991

26 SEP 1932 - 26 DEC 2024

- PASSES AWAY AT 92 FOLLOWING AGE-RELATED MEDICAL ISSUES. DECLARED DEAD AT 9.51 PM
- SEVEN-DAY NATIONAL MOURNING EXPECTED TO BE OBSERVED
- LAST RITES WILL BE CONDUCTED WITH FULL STATE HONOURS

SANTWANA BHATTACHARYA
EDITOR

ECONOMICAL with his words, but gentle in his phrasing, the conversations he struck up were with the times. And he persuaded the times to change.

That was Dr Manmohan Singh, the self-effacing savant who rose to perform two big roles for an India in transition — that of prime minister and finance minister. In both roles, he is likely to win a contest with history for having been the most clean of spirit and genuinely courteous, the most knowledgeable and, arguably, the most transformational.

Perhaps only India's first prime minister could run him close. If Jawaharlal Nehru was the founder-statesman of independent India, the guardian spirit of our formative decades, it was Manmohan who fathered the India we see around us today. Its architect, its engineer, its reticent philosopher.

When another gnomic prime minister, Narasimha Rao, picked a safari suit-clad former Reserve Bank of India governor as his second choice finance minister in 1991, it was in a country not yet out of a long famine of new ideas and fresh energy, also one wracked by a decade of militancy, riots and assassinations.

Everyone associates Manmohan Singh's FM years for the way he clanged open the shutters of the Indian economy, the wholesale shift to the so-called Washington Consensus. That became grist for interminable debates — eliciting hurrahs, protectionist fears from local industry and trenchant socialist critique all at once.

It didn't register much in that moment how the unleashing of India's free market "animal spirits", to use one of his favourite phrases, helped sublimate animal spirits of the other kind.

New cities came up, new landscapes of desire, malls, television channels, affordable flights, mint-fresh IT industries, the telecom boom, the Internet, global cuisine on the local *thali* — in fact, everything we now know India to be experientially. We perhaps didn't then realise how much all of that healed us from other traumas of the past.

That silent therapeutic effect scaled up to another level during Manmohan's decade-long incumbency at 7 Race Course Road. Instant historians often saw only the 'notional losses', while the long-range lens captures some of India's best growth years, qualitatively deepened with humane reform.

But that was not all. Did India really have a prime minister from a minority community for a whole decade — and nobody didn't even much notice? Yes, till just the other day.

That's the kind of conversation Manmohan Singh had with history, the future and the present, in his quiet monotone. That will not die away. P9

He will always be remembered for his service to the nation, his unblemished political life and his utmost humility

Droupadi Murmu, President

We interacted regularly when he was PM and I was the CM of Gujarat... His wisdom and humility were always visible

Narendra Modi, Prime Minister

He led India with immense wisdom and integrity. His humility and understanding of economics inspired the nation

Rahul Gandhi, Congress leader

K'taka likely to see milk price hike after Sankranthi festival

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

KARNATAKA Milk Federation (KMF) chairman Bheema Naik said on Thursday that milk price is likely to go up after the Sankranthi festival in January. He told reporters here that unions recently placed a proposal before the federation seeking a revision in milk prices.

They sought a hike of Rs 5 per litre. Discussions have been held in this regard. However, a decision on the proposal will be taken only after a meeting with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, he said.

During a recent meeting at Magadi, dairy farmers submitted a petition to the chief minister seeking a hike of Rs 5 per litre of milk. The milk price was last increased on August 1, 2023, by Rs 3. It was then increased from Rs 39 to Rs 42 a litre. "The hike of Rs 2 per packet cannot be called an increase because the quantity of milk in the packet was increased by 50ml in June 2024," KMF officials said.

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– KMF officials

They said when Siddaramaiah launched Nandini idli-dosa batter on December 25, the KMF members briefed him about the demands of dairy farmers and milk unions.

Federation managing director Shivaswamy said that nothing has been finalised yet. A decision on increasing milk price will be taken after holding a meeting with the chief minister. The meeting will be held after the Sankranthi festival.

CWC flags attacks on Constitution

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge with Rahul Gandhi and others during the Congress Working Committee meeting to mark the 100th anniversary of its Belgaum session presided over by Mahatma Gandhi, in Belagavi, on Thursday | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

NAUSHAD BIJAPUR & SUBHASH CHANDRA NS @ Belagavi

THE extended Congress Working Committee (CWC) at Belagavi on Thursday sealed its commitment to revamp the party organisation in the coming months and fight "anti-Constitutional" sentiments taking sway across the country.

The CWC resolved to commit to protecting the Indian Constitution and the ideals of the Indian Independence Movement. Accordingly, the CWC resolved to launch the "Jai Bapu, Jai Bhim, Jai Samvidhan Abhiyan", beginning with a rally in Belagavi on Friday (December 27) and culminating in a rally at Mhow on January 26th, 2025, commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Constitution coming into force and the founding of our Republic.

During this month, rallies will be organized in every block, district, and state as well.

CONG MEET CANCELLED

The mega convention of the Congress to be held in Belagavi on Friday has been cancelled, following the demise of former PM Dr Manmohan Singh.

The CWC met on Thursday to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's historic taking over of the Presidency of Indian National Congress at its 39th Session in 1924.

CWC expressed concerns over alleged state-sponsored increase in communal and ethnic hatred, particularly targeted against minority communities. Manipur, which has been burning since May 2023, continues to be met with indifference by the Prime Minister and his Government. The Prime Minister has not visited this troubled state ever since violence erupted in May 2023. Communal tension has deliberately been stoked in Sambhal and other places for the RSS-BJP's narrow political gain. The Places of Worship Act, 1991 to which the Indian National Congress is firmly committed in letter and spirit has also come under needless and reckless debate, the CWC opined.

The CWC also condemned in the strongest terms, the manner in which peaceful protests by Congress were dealt with by the governments in BJP-ruled states like Assam and UP. A number of Congress workers lost their lives. This is totally unacceptable, and it only reflects the anti-democratic mindset of the BJP. The meeting demanded a socio-economic caste census be conducted at the earliest.

The 50% ceiling on reservations for scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, and OBCs must be increased so as to further enhance the benefits accrued to these three traditionally disadvantaged groups of our society. P4

'Distorted' map: Cong downplays BJP allegations

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Belagavi

CONGRESS leaders on Thursday downplayed the controversy over party posters with "distorted" India map put up here for the centenary celebrations of the 1924 Congress session and said BJP was needlessly spreading false information.

Reacting to BJP's allegations that some posters had the distorted map, Congress leader Priyank Kharge said they were put up by some private companies. Those posters have already been removed. BJP is making baseless allegations, he added.

Reacting to BJP leader Amit Malviya's social media post on the alleged distorted map, KPCC chief DK Shivakumar said those posters have been removed.

BJP and JDS reportedly stated that the map did not have the Gilgit region of PoK and Aksai Chin now under China, which are integral parts of J&K.

"Amit Malviya's job is to spread fake news. Look at the cases filed against him," Priyank Kharge told a section of the media. "He (Amit Malviya) is the king of misinformation and fake news. If you look at his timeline, you will come to know (spreading fake news). Why are you giving so much importance to him? What truth has he spoken?" Priyank said. P4

MELBOURNE TEST

KOHLI SHOULDER BUMPS KONSTAS, ICC PENALISES

GOMESH S @ Melbourne

WHAT is India versus Australia match without a dash of controversy and pinch of heated exchanges. What makes this even more riveting are the two protagonists involved. One a teenager on debut and the other a veteran of 121 Tests and at 36, is almost double the former's age. Sam Konstas and Virat Kohli. The two cricketing figures of contrasting fame clashed on the field. In short, there were two headlines on Day One here — Konstas's fiery knock (60 off 65 balls) and his shoulder episode with Kohli after 10th over.

Konstas was on fire, hitting the almost-invincible Jasprit Bumrah, including a sux, in the most unconventional style in Tests, especially by an opener. The two were seen engageming in verbal altercation after Kohli seemed to have nudged the youngster on his shoulder while walking to the other end.

Later, the match referee fined Kohli 20 per cent of match fee after hearing. "Kohli was found to have breached Article 2.12 of the ICC Code of Conduct... which relates to 'inappropriate physical contact with a Player...'," the ICC stated. Though former players criticised Kohli, Konstas later said, "I was just doing my gloves and I think he accidentally bumped me. I think that's just cricket and can happen with tension. I think the emotions got to both of us." P13

EXPRESS READ

Contractor ends life, accuses min's supporter

Bidar: A contractor ended his life in Bhalki taluk here on Tuesday, accusing nine people, including former Kalaburagi corporator Raju Kapanoor, said to be a supporter of Minister Priyank Kharge, of being responsible for his death. Police said Sachin's body was found near the railway track near Katti Tugaon. P4

WITH THIS ISSUE

CITY'S BEST WEEKEND GUIDE INDULGE 44 PAGES, INCLUDING 32 OF INDULGE (TABLOID)

2004 CATASTROPHE

Tsunami severely exposed women's vulnerabilities

BALA CHAUHAN @ Bengaluru

IT has been 20 years since the deadly tsunami struck, killing around 230,000 people across more than a dozen countries and causing unprecedented damage in India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Thailand.

Dr K Sekar and Dr C Jayakumar, experts in psychiatric social work (PSW), National Institute of Mental Health & Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS), who, along with other mental health experts from NIMHANS, were at ground zero, narrated the impact of the deadly earthquake under the Indian Ocean on women and their mental health.

"Majority of victims (of the tsunami) were women. Most of them did not know how to swim. There was death, devastation, loss and raw emotions of people. They were angry with kadal (ocean), which they had looked upon historically as god till that fateful morning of December 26, 2004. In Cuddalore, there was a belief that tsunami was the wrath unleashed by the sea goddess after some menstruating women touched the sea," said Dr Sekar.

The tsunami exposed and tested the vulnerability of women like never before. "While many widowers got remarried, widow remarriage was not an easy option in many of the affected places except for some of those, who were childless and were given huge compensation by the government. This was in Nagapattinam," he said.

"In some places in Kerala, women, who lost their children, were branded inauspicious by their families. After the first tide receded, it left behind a lot of fish on the seafloor. Ignorant of what lay ahead for them, these women with their kids went to pick up the fish and lost their little ones when the tide returned," Sekar said. P10